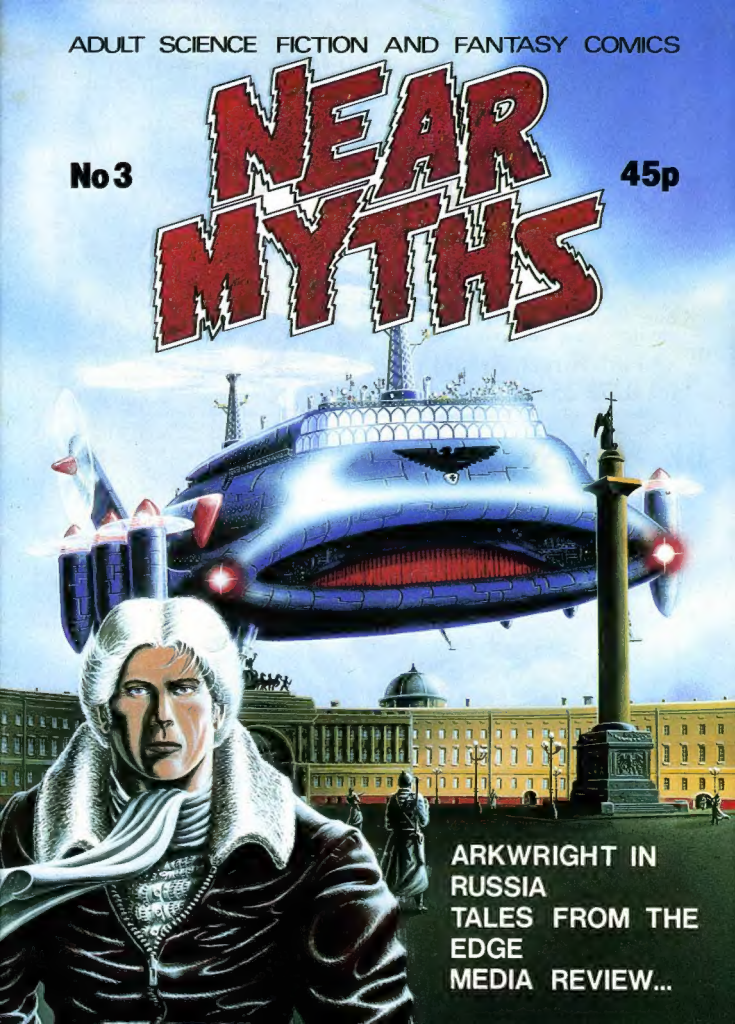
ADULT SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY COMICS

NEAR MYTHS

No 3

45p



ARKWRIGHT IN RUSSIA

TALES FROM THE EDGE

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STAFF

Editor ... ... Rob King
Assistant Editor ... Seoras Lindsay
Production ... ... Andrew Margolis
... ... Chris Haddon
... ... George Forrest

ADVERTISING

Phone 031-667 0426 or write for full details. A Media Revue and mail order tie in is available with advertising by Publishers etc.

Rates: Full page £60 ½ page £35
¼ page £17.50

A special rate of £12.00 for 1/16 page to run in 3 consecutive issues is available.

Near Myths is published by Galaxy Media Distribution, 40 West Crosscauseway, Edinburgh, Scotland.

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Distributed in Great Britain by David Gold and Son Holdings Ltd., Units 15-17A, Rich Industrial Estate, Crimscott Street, London SE1 5TE.

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DECEMBER 78.

GALAXY MEDIA presents

NEAR MYTHS

40 West Crosscauseway, Edinburgh, Scotland

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Tarot reading & German translation: Mary M. Talbot
Layouts: Chris Haddon
Everything else: Bryan Talbot.
(Many thanks to David Noon for the Octobriana material).

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CHAPTER THREE

The Treaty of St. Petersburg

ST. PETERSBURG PARA 00.72.87 FRI 29 SEPT

WELL, K DIVISION WOULDN'T LIKE IT BUT THE RAGNAROK PROTECT WAS IN EFFECT AS OF 12 NOON G.M.T.

THE WEEK OF GROUNDWORK HAD PASSED UNEVENTFULLY... FINALISING ARRANGEMENTS BEGUN MONTHS BEFOREHAND ... STUDYING SOCIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORTS... LAST MINUTE NEGOTIATIONS... SEVERAL INTENSE MEDITATION SESSIONS...

AND NOW ITS MICHAELMAS AND A COLD WIND FANS ACROSS THE RIVER NEVA. ARKWRIGHT PASSES THE ALEXANDER COLUMN COMMEMORATING THE VICTORY OF 1812, MAKING FOR THE RUSSIAN GENERAL STAFF HEADQUARTERS.

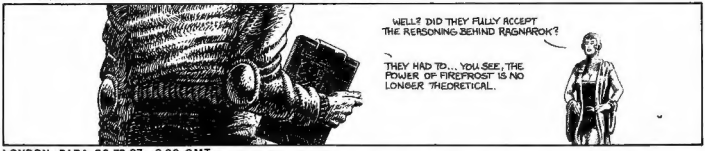
A QUICK MENTAL SCAN REVEALS TWO SETS OF HIDDEN OBSERVERS — PROBABLY FRENCH AND CHINESE.

BRAINSTORM STUDIOS

©BRIAN TALBOT 1978

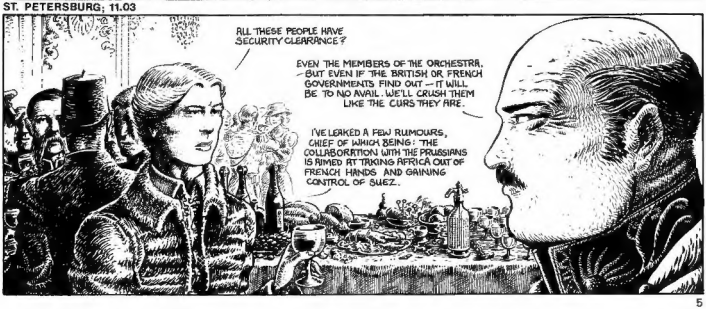
GULF OF FINLAND 11.00

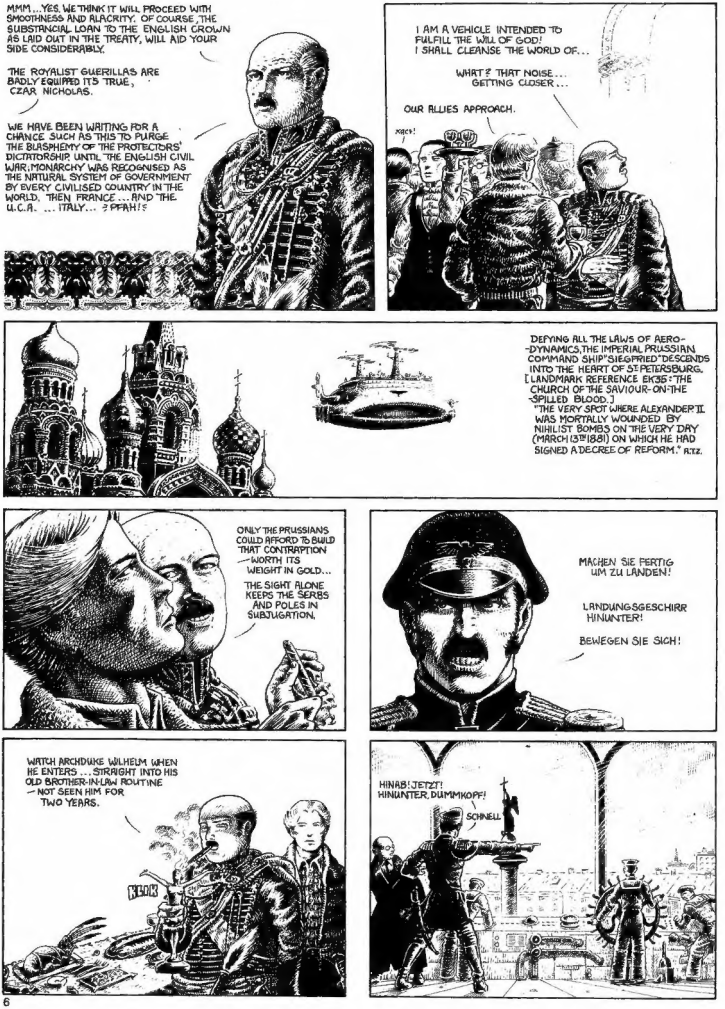
LONDON; PARA. 00.00.00 11.00 (9.00 GMT)

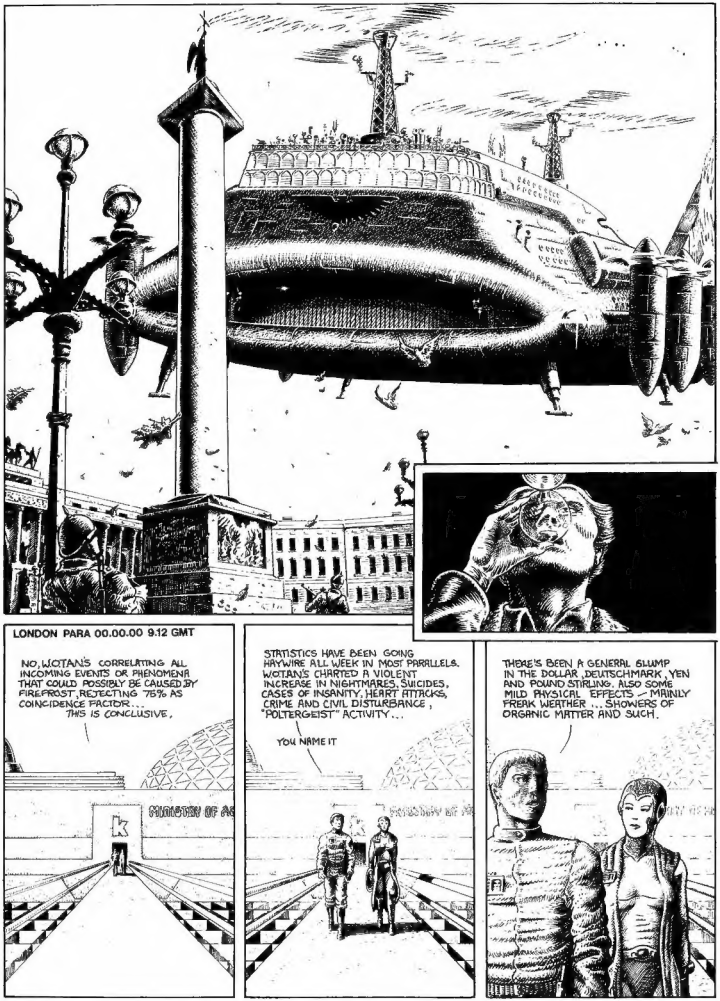


LONDON; PARA. 00.72.87 9.00 GMT

ST. PETERSBURG; 11.03




MMM...YES, WE THINK IT WILL PROCEED WITH SMOOTHNESS AND ALACRITY. OF COURSE, THE SUBSTANCIAL LOAN TO THE ENGLISH CROWN AS LAID OUT IN THE TREATY, WILL AID YOUR SIDE CONSIDERABLY.
THE ROYALIST GUERILLAS ARE BADLY EQUIPPED IT'S TRUE, CZAR NICHOLAS.
WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR A CHANCE SUCH AS THIS TO PURGE THE BLASPHEMY OF THE PROTECTORS' DICTITORSHIP UNTIL THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR; MONARCHY WAS RECOGNISED AS THE NATURAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT BY EVERY CIVILISED COUNTRY IN THE WORLD. THEN FRANCE... AND THE U.S.A. ... ITALY... ? PFAH!?
I AM A VEHICLE INTENDED TO FULFILL THE WILL OF GOD! I SHALL CLEANSE THE WORLD OF...
WHAT? THAT NOISE... GETTING CLOSER...
OUR ALLIES APPROACH.
KRCH!
DEFYING ALL THE LAWS OF AERO-DYNAMICS, THE IMPERIAL PRUSSIAN COMMAND SHIP "SIEGFRIED" DESCENDS INTO THE HEART OF ST PETERSBURG. [LANDMARK REFERENCE EKGB - THE CHURCH OF THE SAVIOUR-ON-THE-SPILLED BLOOD.] "THE VERY SPOT WHERE ALEXANDER II WAS MORTALLY WOUNDED BY NIHILIST BOMBS ON THE VERY DAY (MARCH 13TH 1881) ON WHICH HE HAD SIGNED A DECREE OF REFORM." R.T.E.
ONLY THE PRUSSIANS COULD AFFORD TO BUILD THAT CONTRAPTION — WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD...
THE SIGHT ALONE KEEPS THE SERBS AND POLES IN SUBJUGATION.
MACHEN SIE FERTIG UM ZU LANDEN!
LANDUNGSGESCHIRR HINUNTER!
BEWEGEN SIE SICH!
WATCH ARCHDUKE WILHELM WHEN HE ENTERS ... STRAIGHT INTO HIS OLD BROTHER-IN-LAW ROUTINE — NOT SEEN HIM FOR TWO YEARS.
KLOK
HINAB! JETZT! HINUNTER, DUMMKOPF!
SCHNELL

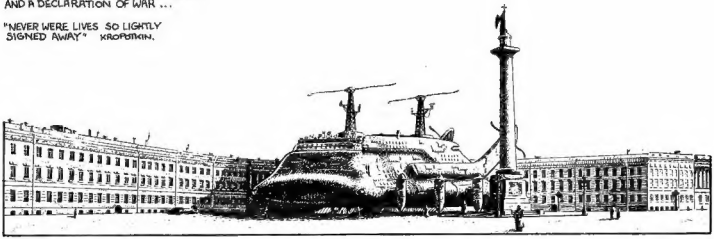

LONDON PARA 00.00.00 9.12 GMT
NO, WOTAN'S CORRELATING ALL INCOMING EVENTS OR PHENOMENA THAT COULD POSSIBLY BE CAUSED BY FIREFROST, REFLECTING 75% AS COINCIDENCE FACTOR... THIS IS CONCLUSIVE,
STATISTICS HAVE BEEN GOING HAYWIRE ALL WEEK IN MOST PARALLELS. WOTAN'S CHARTED A VIOLENT INCREASE IN NIGHTMARES, SUICIDES, CASES OF INSANITY, HEART ATTACKS, CRIME AND CIVIL DISTURBANCE, "POLTERGEIST" ACTIVITY...
YOU NAME IT
THERE'S BEEN A GENERAL SLUMP IN THE DOLLAR, DEUTSCHMARK, YEN AND POUND STERLING. ALSO SOME MILD PHYSICAL EFFECTS — MAINLY FREAK WEATHER ... SHOWERS OF ORGANIC MATTER AND SUCH.

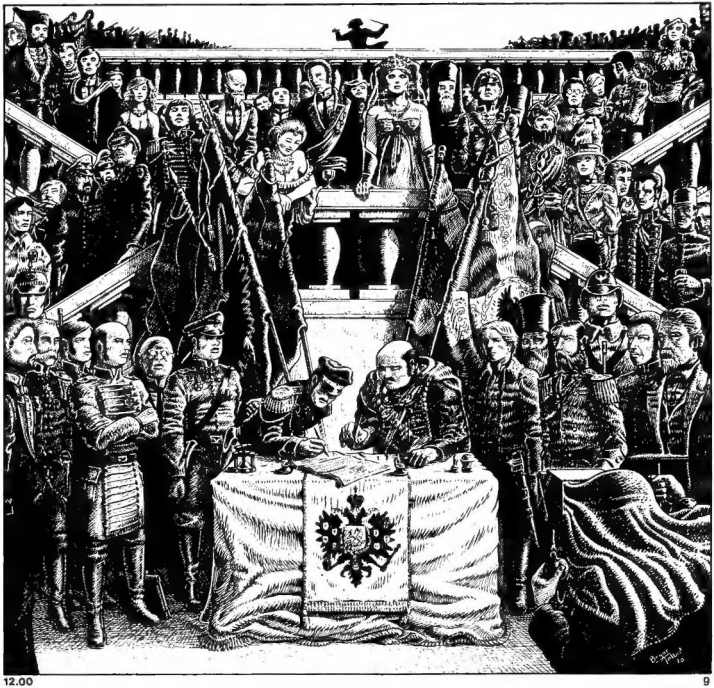
THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING. THINGS WILL GET MUCH WORSE AS THE CYCLE PROGRESSES. WOTAN'S FUTURE PROBABILITY CALCULATIONS POINT TO LUTHER AS OUR ONLY HOPE OF STOPPING IT.
I THINK LUTHER SOMETIMES HALF-REALISES THE TRUTH...
THE OPENING CHORDS OF "RIDE OF THE VALKYRIES" DRIFTS ACROSS THE ENTRANCE HALL AS THE PRUSSIAN HIGH COMMAND APPEARS, LEAD BY ARCHDUKE WILHELM OF SAXONY, HEIR APPARENT TO THE HOLY PRUSSIAN EMPIRE...
MY DEAR BROTHER IN-LAW!
SOMETHING WRONG!... ARKWRIGHT SWEEPS THE PRUSSIAN CHIEFS OF STAFF WITH A ROUTINE MIND PROBE... FOCUS: THE DISTINCTIVE BETA WAVES OF A DISRUPTOR AGENT.
ABOUT TIME TOO! IS THE KAISER STILL INFIRM?
RANDOM SELECTION INCOMING DATA 1200-2400 FRI. 29 SEPT.
PARA 00-58-19 IRAN. SHAH ASSASSINATED
PARA 01-79-23 LONDON. RIOTS, FASCIST RALLY 27 DEAD
PARA 00-28-94 UGANDA. MILITARY COUP CIVIL WAR BREAKOUT
PARA 01-68-85 FRANCE. EIFFEL TOWER COLLAPSES AFTER ANARCHIST ATTACK 42 DEAD
JA, GRANDFATHER NEVER LEAVES THE SEIGFRIED'S ROYAL BEDCHAMBER. THE DOCTORS DON'T GIVE HIM MUCH LONGER TO LIVE.
YOU KNOW KING CHARLES REPRESENTATIVE?
HERR ARKWRIGHT... WE MET AT THE IMPERIAL PRUSSIAN OPERA LAST SPRING.
"GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG", A GOOD PRODUCTION.
"I SEE YOU'VE ANNEXED THE KAISER'S POTSDAM GIANTS TO YOUR PERSONAL RETINUE..."
"HE'S NO USE FOR THEM AT THE MOMENT."
"THEY'RE IMPRESSIVE... BUT I'D KEEP THEM OUT THE WAY OF THE MONGOLIAN RED GUARDS IF I WERE YOU..."

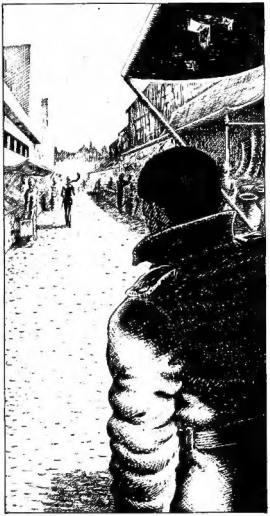
"AND NOW, IF YOU WILL EXCUSE ME GENTLEMEN, I'LL ORDER PREPARATIONS FOR THE CEREMONY. THIS IS A HISTORIC OCCASION."

AND THE GUESTS ASSEMBLE TO OBSERVE THE SIGNING OF AN ALLIANCE AND A DECLARATION OF WAR ...

"NEVER WERE LIVES SO LIGHTLY SIGNED AWAY" KROPSTIKIN.





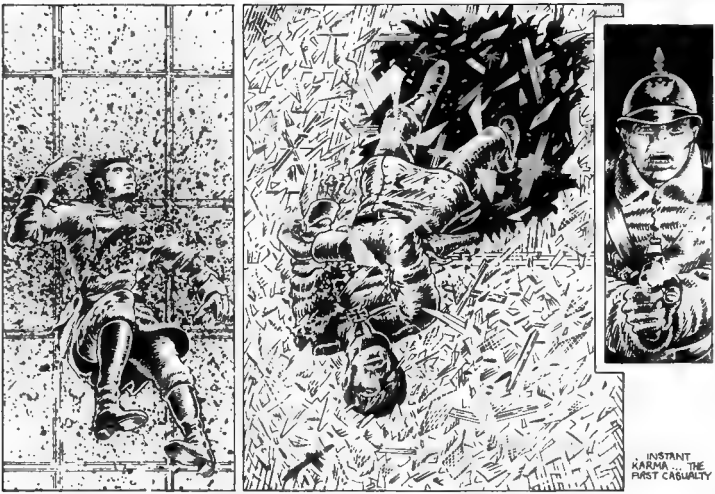


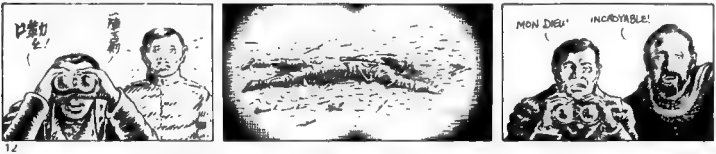
12.24 :NOW! BEING TAILED PAST THE CATHEDRALS, THE SHADOW, AMERICAN JUDGING FROM VIBRATIONS, IS EASY ENOUGH TO LOSE. IN THE OLD HAYMARKET EN ROUTE TO THE JEWISH QUARTER AND THERE: A BRIEF EXCHANGE WITH A CONTACT ; A WHISPERED LOCATION...

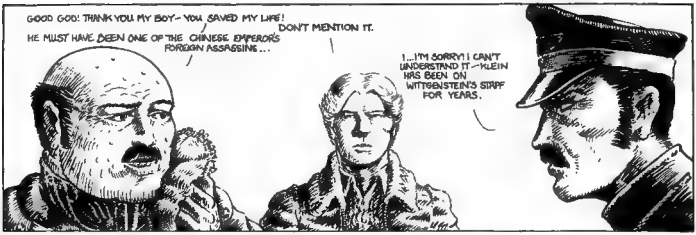
PARA 01-32-69 NORTH AMERICA. VIOLENT TREMORS SAN ANDREAS FAULT

STRANGE THINGS HAVE BEEN HAPPENING. YOU HEARD THE POPE DIED LAST NIGHT?
"YOU HUM IT, I'LL PLAY IT"
HA!
AFTER SUCH A SHORT TERM OF OFFICE.
SIMPLY AN EARLY MANIFESTATION OF FIREFROSTS POWER FROM NOW ON THINGS WILL BE PRETTY UNSTABLE.
HOW ARE YOU FIXED FOR THE REVOLUTION?
MY FREEDOM FIGHTERS ARE ALMOST READY
WAIT UNTIL YOU GET MY TELEGRAM — ABOUT 3 WEEKS
SO SOON? OK WE MAKE LOVE NOW?
NO. LATER. I MUST MEDITATE.
SHIT!
A PROBLEM TO BE DEALT WITH... TAKING OUT AN AGENT OF THE DIS-RUPTOR FORCES WITHOUT IMPLICAT-ING SELF AROUSING UNDUE SUSPICION. THE POSITIONING IS PERFECT... FIRST A THOUGHT IMPLANT. MAKING THE RED GUARD UNEASY . HAIR TRIGGER NERVOUS-NESS . NOW.. DIRECT MIND CONTROL.
HE REALISES. MENTALLY STRUGGLES ..

MAXIMUM EFFECTIVENESS OF MANOEVERE ACHIEVED...
RELINQUISH GRIP ON THOUGHT PROCESS... DISARM...POSITION IN LINE OF FIRE... AND...


...INSTANT KARMA... THE FIRST CASUALTY


MON DIEU!
INCROYABLE!



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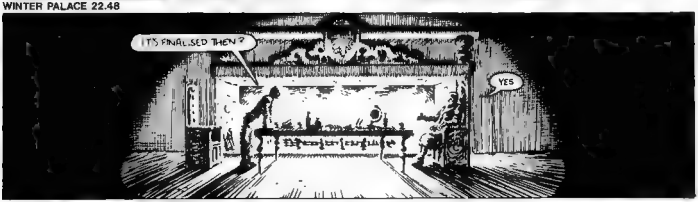
WINTER PALACE 22.48



PARA 00-84-59 GHANA. RELIGIOUS SECT MASS SUICIDE 500 DEAD
PARA 02-73-71 LONDON. PRIME MINISTER THORPE ASSASSINATED
PARA 00-81-33 BELFAST. MASS U.F.O. SIGHTING AT PROTEST MARCH

To be Continued...

The Adventures of Luther Arkwright

SUPPLEMENT

RESUME

Across the parallel worlds, war is continually being waged for their control between various mysterious organisations known collectively as "Disruptors" Working through indigenous agents they have manipulated the course of history to their own ends in many different continuums. Recently the Disruptors have gained possession of a weapon capable of destruction on a cosmic scale The weapon, named "Firefrost" has been been activated and, working by geometrical progression it will not stop until every thing is destroyed Everything, we presume including the Disruptors.

The only technologically advanced parallel existing in complete harmony with itself is termed by its own numbering system, PARA OO OO OO This continuum has for decades been a balancing force to counter Disruptor activities Now, as a last ditch attempt to locate Firefrost before the holocaust, Arkwright,OO-OO-OO's prime agent has been sent to a pre selected parallel to force the Disruptor's hand

This merely involves organising a World War.

Now read on . . . . .

Interpretation of German on 2nd page of "Treaty of St. Petersburg"

Kapitan "Entschuldigen Sie bitte, Mein Herr—wir nahern uns am Russischen Festland"

Captain "Excuse me, sir—we're approaching the Russian mainland"

Archduke "Ach, gut Geben sie die Befehle aus, um auschiffen zu vorbereiten . . . und den Ka ser benachricht gen"

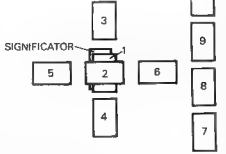
Archduke "Ah good. Issue orders for disembarkment preparations . . and inform the Kaiser

THE SIGNING OF THE TREATY—WHO'S WHO

1 Boris Zioto conductor
2 Imperial Russian Orchestra
3. Secretaries, Russian Ministry of War
4 Ivan Prorokov, Commander-in-chief Cossacks
5. Ilya Nevsky, Russian novelist
6 Lydia Nevsky, his wife
7 A T Yeubushenko, secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs
8. Hans Franck, Chief Technician, Imperial Command Ship "Seigfried"
9 J Schmidt, assistant to Franck
10. Kapitan Richard Kruger, Captain of I.C.S "Siegfried"
11. Oberst Z. Kneiler, 2nd in command, Prussian Secret Service
12 General Gebhard von Braun, Head of Prussian Secret Service
13. Kapitan Lorenz Jager, Commander of Autogyro Fleet
14 Vladimir Harionovitsch, Russian Minister for Home Affairs
15. N Koch, Russian Minister of Finance
16 Aides
17. Joseph Bogration, advisor on Prussian affairs to the Czar
18 Lady Ermina Kasyatkin, mistress to half a dozen members of the Russian Nobility
19 Ladyin waiting
20 Czarina Isabelle, sister to Archduke Wilhelm
21 Archbishop Zovka
22 Colonel Igor Gogol, Head of Russian Secret Police
23 Unidentified member of Russian Orthodox Church Bishopry
24 The Emperor of India India being under Russian "protection"
25 Colonel Zerbet, Head of Russian Science
26. Russian Scientists
27 Lorraine Borissovna, Countess of Latvia
28 Count Dorotkoy of the Ukraine
29 Jasmin Dubrovnik Yugoslav born multi lingual interpreter to the Czar
30 D Gerasimov advisor on British affairs to the Czar
31 Count Neyelov Governor of Turkey
32 Abdul Bey, his Turkish secretary
33 Member of the Potsdam Giants the Kaiser's Personal Bodyguard
34 Baron von Donnersmarck of Silesia, Prussian Minister of Foreign Affairs
35 Feldmarschal Ludwig Wittgenstein

OCTOBRIANA

The indecision of Octobriana is a tribute to the activities of the P.P.P (Progressive Pornography Group) Octobriana is the comic-strip heroine of the Russian Underground and appears in anti state magazines produced illegally in the USSR by the P.P.P This is "brave and invent ve resistance to continued Soviet oppression", surely one of the only places where you get shot for writing and drawing comics, although I wouldn't put it past the government of Chile.



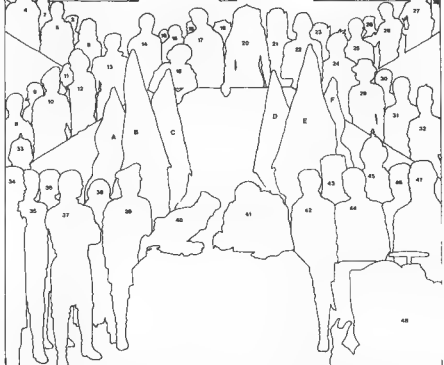
The Flags

A. Wales
B Greater Prussia
C England
D Scotland
E Russia
F Russian Turkey

Analysis of Octobriana's tarot throw for Arkwright (p. 7 of story).

Le Bateleur (Magician) Significator (subject). Clever, subtle, adaptable. The beginning of something new.

1. La Maison Dieu (the Tower) Atmosphere, "this covers him" Ruin War, conflict The ravens of war are gathering
2 Le Diable (the Devil)—Obstacles, "this crosses him" The adversary Stupidity and repression
3. Le Monde (the World)—Plans and purposes, "this crowns him." The fate of the multiverse.
4. IX d'epees (nine of swords)—Background, "this is beneath him" Desolation and suffering Resignation to grim task
5. Les Amoureux (the Lovers) reversed—Recent past, "this is behind him" Indecision
6. III d'epees (three of swords)—Near future. War
7. La Force (Strength)—Present position/attitude Courage, orgone energy, self-discipline The presence and influence of women.
8. L'as d'epees (the ace of swords) Environment Formidable forces are at work
9. X d'epees (the ten of swords)—Hopes or fears. Total ruin and disaster. The failure of all hopes and plans.
10 La Roue de Fortune (the Wheel of Fortune) Summary and outcome. The future depends entirely upon the whims of Destiny



36 Kapitan Moritz Klein, Aide de-Camp to Feldmarschall Wittgenstein
37 Count Kasper Schernhorst of Westphalia, Tact cal advisor to the Archduke
38 Gottlieb Krupp, Prussian Munitions manufacturer advisor
39 Frieder ck Buscher Commander-in-Chief, Prussian armed forces
40 Archduke Wilhelm of Saxony, Ruler of the Prussian Empire on behalf of the Ka ser who is unfit to rule due to infirmity
41 Czar Nicholas VI, Emperor and sole Autocrat of Russia
42 General L. Arkwright represent ng the Union of England, Scotland and Wales, under the crown of Charles II
43 Archbishop Mindszenty, head of the Russian Orthodox Church
44 Prince Dmitri, son of the Czar, heir to the Russian throne and cousin to Charles III
45. Red Guard
46 Count Nikolai Ivanowitsch Commander in Chief of the Russian Army
47 Leo Pavlovsk Prime Minister of the Czar's Government
48 Unknown Russian Ministry of War photographer

Editorial

THREE IS A MAGICAL NUMBER

Here we are again with the 3rd issue and a few more improvements. We were hoping to increase the length of our two main serials "Luther Arkwright" and "Tales from the Edge" to 10 pages an issue. Although we have almost accomplished that in this issue (10 pages and 8 pages respectively), this rate of production puts a bit too much strain on the artists who feel that quality would suffer to maintain quantity. As both Bryan and Graham set themselves such a high standard (they have been known to spend 2 days drawing a single frame), we have decided to continue with 6-8 page chapters as before. With stories of the size and complexity of these, Luther Arkwright is a proposed 150 page strip, some chapters would require more artwork to do them justice. It is intended in such cases to miss one issue and then do a double sized strip in the next, I think that this will be better for the flow of the story.

As you may have noticed, we are fortunate enough to have an illustrated poem by Brian Lumley in this issue. Brian has many books in print in America but none in Britain and since he has offered to let us have some of his short stories to illustrate, we hope to make his books available to readers of Near Myths.

John Eunson has informed me that he wishes to pursue his theatrical career so he has concluded the first part of the *"Star Run Saga"* but he still hopes to contribute on an occasional basis with more of the story. All of us here wish him the best of luck.

Graham Manley has had to drop *"Krairner"* to handle his large commitment with *"Tales From The Edge"* but we intend to have Mike Wilson's scripts drawn by another artist who can do justice to the standard already set by Graham.

I must apologise to readers for all this chopping and changing but with any new venture, one must expect teething troubles and other problems mainly brought about by trying to do things on a very tight budget.

Moving on, the title for this editorial is "Three is a magical number" which brings us to the Luther Arkwright supplement page. This is the first of several supplements to this story and hopefully to be continued with supplements for some of the other artists' strips. In particular, I was interested by the Tarot reading and I believe that bringing this kind of detail into comics to be highly entertaining and fascinating and I would be interested to see other forms of divination, occultism and spiritualism brought into scripts. This adds what could be described as a missing dimension to comic art.

I have found one of the problems with the first two issues to be too many serials running at once so I hope to have more complete strips in future issues with serials running to two episodes, three at most.

That's all until the next issue.

Rob King, Editor

Letters

Dear Ed.,

A British comic for adults—it can't be bad. A great idea; lots of luck to you in this venture although I have my doubts about its viability.

I notice you say American comics are put out cheap on the British market. Well, when you compare their production standards, contents etc., with Near Myths I think you'll find that Near Myths seems a little expensive at 45p. I was disappointed with the lack of colour. Even the shoddy Marvel British reprints use colour. Anyway, that's my impression. I can imagine the cost of colour production etc. so I am not unsympathetic (you've got my money). I'm merely comparing you with the opposition.

Production apart, content is the most important aspect. I was trying to decide how an adult comic would differ from an ordinary comic (aimed at the older juveniles). Well, there's sex for a start (I noticed a few half-hearted nipples in Near Myths) but more important (?) is the ideas you can put across.

I liked 'Tales from the Edge'—story, plot and artwork (takes me back to my Raymond Chandler days), 'Magor' was good, too. I guess I've pretty down to earth tastes. I'm not sure I understood 'Time is a Four Lettered Word.' If I *did* understand it, I wasn't too impressed with the plot. A bit like the stuff in 'Tales of Suspense' and 'Weird Tales' etc. Have I missed something?

I'm afraid I don't quite understand the 'layout' of 'Luther Arkwright' but that may become clearer on reading issue 1.

May I suggest that you do not try to be too 'New Wave'. That's not to say I don't like some New Wave stuff, but it's very difficult to write well. A good plot can carry mediocre artwork but never vice versa (I'm not suggesting any of the artwork is mediocre—it is, after all, largely a matter of opinion). On the subject of artwork, I like John Euson's style although I would prefer to see it just a little 'tighter'.

The reviews could become an important part of the magazine but rather than just tell us (the readers) what is available, I would prefer to see critical reviews. Quoting from the cover is not enough (Mechanismo). If your reviews are all full of praise they are worth little.

Let's hope it's not a myth at all. (Am I the first to say that?)

Ian Waugh,
Wardley, Tyne and Wear

Dear Ed,

This letter concerns your publication 'Near Myths'. I was pleased to see your publication on sale in quite a few shops in Northampton; I snatched it up immediately. But already there was a disappointment at the obvious words 'For Adults' written boldly on the front and I was dubious about the magazine's contents. I think unnecessary sex and violence spoils the story completely but I was glad to see you kept this to a minimum. Also, please be more discreet concerning 'For Adults', after all on the inside you say it is suitable for older children. I am not tall and I am always afraid I cannot get something because somebody disbelieves me when I tell them my age although I must say how easy it can be for younger children to get "Adult?" publications.

I was pleased at the presentation of your magazine and the price was okay. Your first story, "Krairner" was quite good on script and art looking quite professional at times. Graham Manley is a good artist with a nice style blending well with the story.

I was very pleased at seeing 'Luther Arkwright with Bryan Talbot at its helm. Script and Artwork very well produced and nicely laid out art. The parallel world theme has never been exploited much but this was done marvellously, truly professional work.

'Radio Comix' and Chris Haddon's stories I will skip entirely, a total waste of paper. 'Star Run Saga' was quite good and doubtless the story will get better.

Issue Two was an immense improvement. I am glad to see it is bigger and has more pages. The cover I thought was much better. The magazine looks so much more professional.

'Luther Arkwright' was just as good, the plot getting even more complicated, but a joy to read. 'Magor the Mage' is not very good and seems as though it is just there to fill space.

A. Sherrington,
Northampton

MAGOR THE MAGE

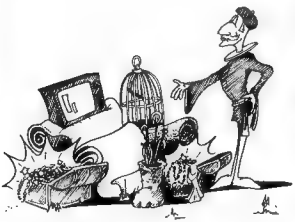
The plot sickens and the knees begin trembling . . . . . .
Recap: Magor, the hereditary Mage of Mephistoland is performing his historic function as the Referee of the Trans Arcanian games. He arrives to find that the games are in confusion, chaos and uproar due to the appearance of the Lady Varagin, the infamous beauty who caused inter-galactic war!!! In consequence she had been imprisoned in a locket by Magor's great-great grandfather until released unwittingly by the hapless Dobbin (Magor the Mage's major Domo) who is now faced with the daunting task of rectifying his mistake . . . .

THE LADY IN THE CRYSTAL PART 2.

Written by JOHN TAYLOR Drawn by CHRIS HADDON

SUDDENLY, FROM UNDERNEATH THE TENT TRUMPETS BLOW AN EAR-SHATTERING FANFARE.. THEY CEASE STRUGGLING..

THE MOST NOBLE AND DIVINE LADY VARAGIN OF VARR WISHES IT TO BE KNOWN TO ALL THOSE OF NOBLE BIRTH THAT SHE MIGHT CONSIDER GIVING HER HAND IN MARRIAGE TO THE ONE WHO CAN PROVE TO HER THAT THEY HAVE ENOUGH WEALTH TO SUSTAIN HER IN A STYLE TO WHICH SHE CAN EASILY BECOME ACCUSTOMED... LET ALL SUCH STAND FORTH AND AT THE SIGNAL DEPART...



ONCE MORE THE TRUMPETS SOUND...

HEAR YE, HEAR YE... THE MOST NOBLE AND DIVINE LADY VARAGIN OF VARR WISHES IT TO BE KNOWN THAT SHE MIGHT CONSIDER GIVING HER HAND IN MARRIAGE TO THE ONE WHO CAN PROVE HIS VALOUR BY PRESENTING HER WITH THE BACK MOLAR OF A... DREADED ORSOPHAG!!...

ONCE MORE THOSE FEW BRAVE SPIRITS WING THEIR WAY ACROSS ARCANIAN SKIES TO THE HORRIBLE LAND OF THE HEINOUS ORSOPHAG!!! !!

SOME USE GUILE..

SOME USE MAGIC...

SOME USE LOW CUNNING

PSST...

FIRST.. DE MONEY..

WOULDN'T ARGUE WITH THAT...

WHAT HAPPENED?

SHE SAID THEY WERE FAKES!

DOES NOTHING SATISFY HER!?

THE TRUMPETS SOUND ONCE MORE AND THE WEARY CHAMPIONS STAGGER TO THEIR FEET...

HEAR YE, HEAR YE

GET ON WITH IT!!

...MAY WIN HER HAND IN MARRIAGE WITH THEIR ERUDITION, LEARNING AND WIT, BY RECITING A POEM IN HER HONOUR.

DANG!

DANG!

?

LATER THAT NIGHT THE CAMP BY THE ARENA IS FULL OF MUTTERING, PACING FIGURES...

A MAN ONCE SOLILOQUISED THUS TO HIS FREIND WHO WAS COVERED IN PUSS...

TO LOVE OR NOT TO LOVE, THAT IS THE...

I CANT HELP IT IF I LOVES YER, COS I'M ONLY A SIMPLE SOD...

NO ITS NOT! WE MUST RESORT TO TRICKERY. LISTEN...(WHISPER-WHISPER)

ITS HOPELESS, HOPELESS...

...INCLUDING ONE WHO BECKONS FROM THE DARKNESS...

PSST... I HAVE THIS BOOK OF POEMS HERE.. FOR A SMALL FEE... AND FOR ONLY A FEW PENCE MORE...

?

AS DAWN BREAKS, A HOODED FIGURE APPROACHES DOBRINS AND THE ORPH. AS THE FIGURE DRAWS CLOSER THEY RECOGNISE MAGOR...

I GOT ROUND THEM ALL WITH THAT SILLY POEM- CONVINCED THEM IT WAS THE MOST OVERWHELMING PIECE OF POETRY EVER WRITTEN. I MADE 12oz OF MOON DUST AND...

HAVE YOU LEARNT YOURS DOBRINS?

OH YES.. "CAN I COMPARE THEE TO A SUMMERS DAY..

I WONDER HOW SHE'LL LIKE IT.."MY LITTLE EYES ARE SLEEPY, LIKE AN EGG IN RANCID FAT"... SHE'LL GO DAFT!!

THE HOUR OF RECKONING HAS ARRIVED... THE CONTESTANTS ENTER VARAGIN'S TENT...

MAYBE SHE'S HAVING THEM FOR BREAKFAST.

COME ON, ITS YOUR TURN NOW.

THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG! THEY'RE NOT COMING OUT!!

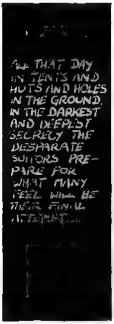
THE LADY VARAGIN WOULD LIKE TO DECLARE THIS CONTEST A DRAW!

OH NO!

EXCEPT FOR THIS... WHO FAILED MISERABLY!!!

AS THE LADY VARAGIN CANNOT LEGALY MARRY ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY THREE MEN, SHE DECLARES THAT THE ONLY MAN SHE WILL MARRY IS THE ONE WHO CAN DANCE THE MOST SUBLIMELY...

YOU'VE GOT A CHANCE YET DOBBINS!!


THAT DAY IN TENTS AND HUTS AND HOLES IN THE GROUND, IN THE DARKEST AND DEEPEST SECRECY THE DESPARATE SUITORS PREPARE FOR WHAT MANY FEEL WILL BE THEIR FINAL ATTEMPT...

IT IS NIGHT, THE STAGE IS IN DARKNESS.
OUCH!!
CHEEKY!!
GET OFF MY FOOT!!
OOOF!
THE CHAMPIONS ARE WAITING, A DIVINE FEMALE HAND PRESSES A BUTTON AND IN A BLAZE OF LIGHT...

ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY FOUR JOHN REVOLTA'S...
OH NO!

ONE OF WHOM CRACKS UP...
I CAN'T STAND IT ANYMORE!!!

AND WITHOUT MORE ADO, HE LEAPS UP ONTO THE PODIUM...
SPOILT, SELFISH, SCHEMING, NASTY, HORRIBLE, SELF-CENTERED BITCH!!!!

.. ONLY TO BE GREETED BY THE RADIANT, SMILING FACE OF VARAGIN.
YOU'RE THE ONLY MAN WHO EVER HAD THE STRENGTH OF WILL TO OBJECT TO ANYTHING I'VE DONE ..!!! I LOVE YOU!!!
... AND AS HER LIPS BRUSH DOBBINS' CHEEK, SHE DISAPPEARS IN A CLOUD OF SMOKE..
BANG
!
INSTANTLY, THROUGHOUT THE LAND, THEY ALL FORGET ABOUT THEIR OBSESSION AND AS ALL TRUE ARCANIANS DO, LET BYGONES BE BYGONES. AND GATHER ROUND A BONFIRE TO DRINK AND FEAST AND LAUGH OVER THEIR ANTICS AS SHOWN TO THEM BY MAGOR ON HIS SOULSTONE...
ARCANIANS WELCOME WE CARE FOR VEGETARIANS
HERES YOUR LOCKET DOBBINS. KEEP IT FOR A SOUVENIR.
OH ER THANKS
OOPS... MISSED.
OH NO!
ITS FALLEN ON THE SOULSTONE...!!
WE DRAW THE CURTAIN OF DECENCY ACROSS THE ENSUING SCENE...
LE FIN!

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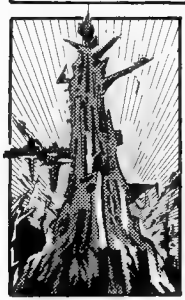
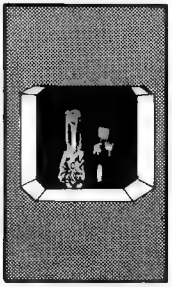
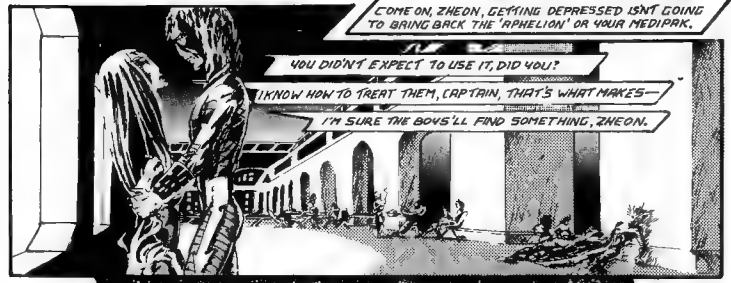
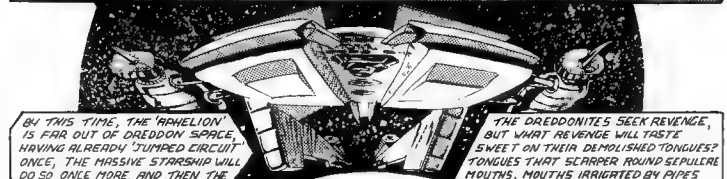
DUSK CREEPS OVER THE LEPER LANDSCAPES OF DREDDON. THE ENTIRE FORTY-MAN CREW OF THE STARSHIP 'APHELION' SLOWLY AWAKEN TO THE FACT THAT THEY HAVE BEEN DECEIVED! THE DRUGGED NUTRIENTS THE DREDDONITES GAVE THEM CONTAINED CHEMICALS POISONOUS TO THE LIPILITE MEMBERS OF THEIR CREW. LUCKILY THEIR NUMBERS AMMOUNT TO FIVE ONLY... BUT MEDICMAN ZHEON, THINKING HER SOLE REASON FOR BEING ON DREDDON WOULD BE TO REQUISITION MEDICAL SUPPLIES FOR THE DREDDONITES, AND NEVER SUSPECTING THAT ACCESS TO THE APHELION WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE, NEGLECTED TO TAKE A MEDIPAK WITH HER...









BY THIS TIME, THE 'APHELION' IS FAR OUT OF DREDDON SPACE, HAVING ALREADY JUMPED CIRCUIT ONCE, THE MASSIVE STARSHIP WILL DO SO ONCE MORE, AND THEN THE DREDDONITES WILL ARRIVE AT THEIR DESTINATION.

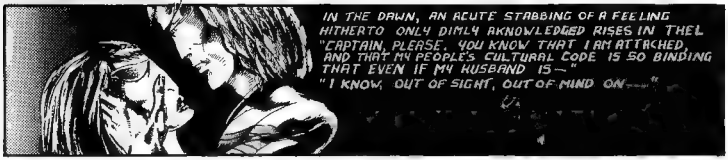
THE DREDDONITES SEEK REVENGE, BUT WHAT REVENGE WILL TASTE SWEET ON THEIR DEMOLISHED TONGUES? TONGUES THAT SCARPER ROUND SEPULCRE MOUTHS, MOUTHS IRRIGATED BY PIPES UNDER THEIR PLASTIC MASKS...

THE STAR RUN SAGA

CH3: BENEATH THE MASKS, BEHIND THE SMILES.

GRAPHICS AND TEXT: JOHN EWINSON '78

WELL, IF WE CAN'T CLONE WITH OUR SCRAMBLED GENES, THEN NEITHER SHALL THEY!
INGENIOUS, BOULTRECW, FAKING THAT CASSETTE OF CAPTAIN THEL, ORDERING THEIR ANDROIDS TO TAKE US TO THEIR BIGGEST CLONING BASE!


IN THE DAWN, AN ACUTE STABBING OF A FEELING HITHERTO ONLY DIMLY ACKNOWLEDGED RISES IN THEL
"CAPTAIN, PLEASE, YOU KNOW THAT I AM ATTACHED AND THAT MY PEOPLE'S CULTURAL CODE IS SO BINDING THAT EVEN IF MY HUSBAND IS—"
"I KNOW, OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND ON—"

SEQUEI, MOON OF NED445VI, HOME OF THE BIGGEST CLONING CENTRE IN THE C.S.A.

WHAT AM I GOING TO DO WITHOUT YOU, XHORN? I'LL HAVE TO FIND SOME ONE ELSE TO COME WITH ME ON MY LITTLE "JAUNTS."
AND IT WON'T BE JUST ME WHO'LL MISS YOU! I KNOW QUITE A FEW PEOPLE WHO'LL FIND YOUR 'SERVICES' IRREPLACEABLE!

I SURE HOPE YOUR WIFE NEVER FINDS OUT! HEH! HEH! HEH!

CAPTAIN, WE'VE FOUND SOME BLANKETS AND MEDICINE, AND THERE'S SOME METAL PIPING OUTSIDE WE COULD USE TO MAKE STRETCHERS.

THEY'RE READY TO BE MOVED NOW, CAPTAIN.
THAT DIDN'T TAKE LONG, MEDICMAN.

HERE, YOU'LL NEED THIS. THAT WAS MY LAST MONITOR CHECK; MY SHUTTLE ALWAYS

SAY THAT AGAIN, GOULTRECH!
I'M SORRY ABOUT... EARLIER-
DEAR THEL, IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL BETTER, I ALMOST GAVE IN.
I HAVE FOUND A FREQUENCY THAT WILL STOP THE ANDROIDS FUNCTIONING!
THAT WILL PUT THEIR WEAPONS SYSTEMS IN OUR HANDS!
I WISH THEY'D LEFT US SOME LIGHT!
BUT THE FREQUENCY WON'T AFFECT THE SPACE JUMP MECHANISM?
NO, MAYOR. IT'S AUTOMATIC. GO JAMMING!
WATCH OUT, BOYS: STEPS JUST AHEAD!
EEEEEEEEEE
WHA-? THE FORCE SHIELD'S SHUT DOWN.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE SLAVES?
WHO IN HELL ARE THOSE CRAZY BASTARDS? UH-OH! THAT VIBRATION WE MUST BE GOING TO JUMP CIRCUIT AGAIN.
ZHEON!

PANIC!
GIVES WAY TO THE METHODICAL BEAT OF TRAINING RATIONALE WITH EACH DEEP, SECURE BREATH, WITH EVERY HEART BEAT SLOWING DOWN TO ITS NORMAL LEVEL.
HOW FAR SHE WILL FALL, SHE CANNOT ASCERTAIN. AS SHE RIPS HER TUNIC OFF, FREEING THE GOSSAMER MEMBRANES RUNNING THE LENGTH OF HER ARMS, SHE IS AWARE THAT EACH SECOND LATER MIGHT BE TOO LATE! BUT AS THE AIR RUSHES INTO THOSE MEMBRANES, REMNANTS OF ANCIENT ANCESTRY, FILLING THEM OUT LIKE PARACHUTES, HER FALL SLOWS UNTIL IT IS FLIGHT, UNDER HER CONTROL.
... AND AS SHE FALLS, SHE BECOMES AWARE OF THE LIGHT, AND THE SHAFT!
TAKE CARE, AND-- JUST MAKE SURE YOU GET THOSE CONTAMINATED CULTURES TO OBERON IV SAFELY.
FIRE!
TO BE CONTINUED--
ELSEWHEN
© JOHN EGNSON 1978

MEDIA REVIEW & Mail Order

DRAGONSINGER : Harper of Pern
by Anne McCaffrey Corgi 85p

Dragonsinger is the fourth novel which Anne McCaffrey has written about Pern. For those who haven't read any of them, Pern is a feudal society which is ravaged once every two centuries by the evil threads, space-borne spores from another planet which voraciously consume all organic matter. The first settlers on the planet bred enormous fire-breathing dragons with teleporting abilities, which could be telepathically linked with a human upon hatching. These dragonriders could then char thread from the skies as it fell. There's a delicate balance on Pern between the Weyrs, where dragons and riders live, the Holds, which are essentially manors, and the crafts, independent associations of harpers, smiths, miners, farmers, and so on.

The first book in the series was *Dragonflight,* and it is probably responsible for the initial popularity of the series. It tells of the return of threads after four hundred years, of the efforts of the sole remaining Weyr to prepare an unwilling and hostile

Dragonquest (2) 85p

Dragonflight (1) 75p

planet, and of the discovery that dragons can travel in time as well as space. The second book, *Dragonquest,* is a more than adequate sequel, and in many ways it's a better book than the first The third book, *Dragonsong,* and the current one, *Dragonsinger,* aren't continuations of the earlier two, but take place during the action of *Dragonquest.* They tell the story of Menolly, a teenage musical prodigy who runs away from her home and hold because they won't let her, a mere girl, become a Harper.

I found *Dragonsinger* to be a great disappointment. Both the Menolly books struck me as being juvenile works—that is, aimed at a younger audience. There's nothing wrong in incorporating a book of this kind into a series: James Blish did it in "Cities in Flight" quite successfully. Though such a book would inevitably disappoint anyone looking for a full-blooded epic novel along the lines of the first two books, there's no reason why it can't be good on its own terms—and indeed, *Dragonsong* is a good book of its kind. I'd always thought that the rest of Pern outside the Weyrs must be exceedingly dull, but the picture of life in a sea-hold painted in *Dragonsong* isn't just utterly boring, but oppressive also. Menolly's flight from this world was well treated in the third book.

Dragonsinger is merely Enid Blyton on another planet. The Harper Craft Hall seems just like a boarding school, complete with temperamental masters and spiteful girls: though nobody actually says "You're a brick, Menolly", she does get called a little sneak. The plot is virtually non-existent, and the sole interest lies in cheering on our heroine as she proves her musical genius and is promoted journeyman in a week, while the most spiteful girl gets expelled for being too nasty. The only good chapters in the book are the hatching of the fire lizards, in which the Masterharper Robinton shows a flash of the personality that made him one of the most fascinating characters in the first two books, and the Gather chapter. A gather is a market/festival, and it seemed interesting enough, though all Menolly did there was beat up a couple of bullies and sing her hit song to rapturous applause. The characterisation, especially of Robinton, is lacking in depth, and Lord Holder Groghe seems a totally different person to the reactionary portrayed in *Dragonquest*—I wondered if my memory was faulty. And most disappointing of all was that the potential of setting a novel in the Harpers' Hall was unexplored—anyone who read the story about the Dylanologist in *"The Ship Who Sang"* knows that the theme of song and social change is one she has treated better in the past.

What went wrong, then? The strength of the first two books lay in the way Pern was treated as a society. In *Dragonflight* we had the reactions to the return of thread, in *Dragonquest* there were the two themes of the old-time Weyrs adjusting to new conditions and the attempt to get to the red star and eradicate thread at source. All these ideas were developed in relation to Pern as a society, and not merely as collisions of personalities. And in *Dragonsong,* appropriately enough for a juvenile book, the emphasis was changed to the effect of outdated social norms on one person—Menolly—and how she didn't fit into a reactionary culture. In the latest book, those themes have been totally lost. There's no insight at all into a wider social order, whether in terms of its own change or anyone else's. Even the fire-lizards are seldom more than pets which only serve to make people jealous, like a new cricket-bat. And

Continued on page 37

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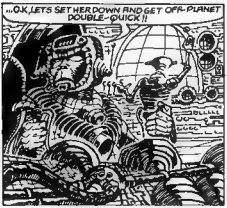
BREAKOUT ON KATTALUS



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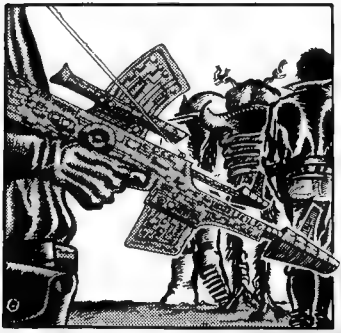

...PUSHED, HUSTLED, SHOVED AROUND... THE WAY IT HAD BEEN ALL THE FROM ALGOLIV...
THAT'S WRY
C'MON—MOVE IT—SCUM!!

I'D BEEN BIDING MY TIME, HOW-I WAS ON KATTALUS, AND THE ONLY THING THAT HAD KEPT ME FROM MAKING A BREAK BEFORE NOW WAS SOME THING COUNTESS DE QUINCEY HAD SAID JUST AFTER THE POLICE BURST ABOARD THE HEDONIA

HOW DOES IT LOOK?
PRETTY BAD, COUNTESS. THEY'VE BREACHED THE MAIN LOCKS!!! I SHOULD BE HERE ANY SECOND...
DON'T WORRY, SEBASTIAN, SHE SAID, YOU FIND THE MOLOCHITE FOR US AND WE'LL GET YOU OFF KATTALUS—AND THROW IN ONE MILLION CREDITS AS YOUR FEE....

NOW...
CHOOM
SO LONG SEBASTIAN—SEE YOU AROUND!!

WELL WELL... WE SEEM TO HAVE GOT OURSELVES THE BOOBY PRIZE!!

NO SIGN OF DE QUINCEY AND THE OTHERS, SIR

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH THIS ONE?
AH... YES... NO PAPERS? HMMM...
—IT IS THE MAIN SHADE COMMAND—TAKE HIM AND CARRIAGE HIM WITH THE OTHERS, SGT.

AFTER THAT, IT WAS RELATIVELY STRAIGHTFORWARD TO BE PROCESSED THROUGH WHAT PASSES FOR A JUDICIAL SYSTEM ON ALGOLIV...
YOU ARE HEREBY SENTENCED TO TWENTY YEARS REHABILITATION ON KATTALUS. KLIK!! WHIRR
—NEXT!

THERE GOES THE PRISON SHIP!
YEAH—POOR BASTARDS

I HAD TO MAKE MY MOVE SOON IF I WAS EVER TO GET OUT OF THIS PLACE, BEFORE THEY DRAGGED ME OFF TO ONE OF THE SLAVE LABOUR CAMPS OR WORSE STILL, TO SOME CHARNEL HOUSE OF A LABORATORY. RUMOUR HAD IT THAT SOMEWHERE IN THE JUNGLES OF THE INTERIOR OF THE MAIN CONTINENT ON KATTALUS, ON WHICH THE PENAL COLONY WAS SITUATED, WERE SMALL BANDS OF ESCAPED CONVICTS EKING OUT A PRIMITIVE EXISTENCE. IT SEEMED TO BE MY ONLY LEAD. IF STARVENSKI WAS HERE SOMEWHERE, IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT THEY MIGHT KNOW OF IT

CHUK!!
KRAK!!
OOPS!!
B-ROOM!!
EEOWWEEEOWWEEOWWE
A HANGER!! ...I'M IN LUCK!!
AND AN AIR-CAR TOO... NOW TO GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE!!!
ZWAM!!

..THE EARTHMAN SHADE, EXCELLENCY! HE HAS ESCAPED!!
WHAT!! FOOL—THAT WAS AS INTENDED!!
BUT EXCELLENCY, IT WAS NOT AS PLANNED!! HE OVERPOWERED HIS GUARD AND STOLE AN AIR CAR. THERE WAS NO TIME TO INITIATE SURVEILLANCE PROCEDURES!!
YOU IMBECILE!! I'LL HAVE YOU FLAYED ALIVE FOR THIS I'LL.. I'LL...
ATTENTION!! ALL AVAILABLE UNITS. AN IMMEDIATE SEARCH IS TO BE MOUNTED FOR A STOLEN AIR CAR..
WHEN IT HAS BEEN LOCATED I AM TO BE INFORMED AND NO ACTION IS TO BE TAKEN!! TOTAL SURVEILLANCE IS TO BE KEPT! IF SHADE IS PRE-MATURELY WARNED AND ESCAPES AGAIN I GIVE YOU MY WORD.. HEADS WILL ROLL!!
THE AIR-CAR HAD RUN OUT OF FUEL, DUMPING ME IN A PRIMEVAL JUNGLE SOME 1000 KM FROM THE PENAL-COLONY — NOT FAR WHEN YOU'RE ALONE, ARMED ONLY WITH A BLASTER, AND THE WHOLE OF A PLANETS SECURITY FORCE ON YOUR TAIL! THE QUESTIONS WERE BEGINNING TO MOUNT UP. WHO HIRED ME IN THE FIRST PLACE? WHY DID THEY WANT STARVENSK ANYWAY? AT LEAST I THOUGHT I KNEW WHY SNAKES GIRTHS MOB WANTED HIM. WHY, AFTER THE BUST, HAD I BEEN CAREFULLY SEGREGATED FROM THE CREW OF THE 'HEDONIA'; AND WHY HAD THE GUARD COME ALONE TO MY CELL IN THE FIRST PLACE? I HAD A FEELING THAT THERE WAS MUCH MORE AT STAKE HERE THAN EVEN 1 BILLION CR WORTH OF MOLOCHITE!!

..PERHAPS STARVENSK, IF I EVER FOUND HIM, COULD PROVIDE ME WITH SOME ANSWERS....

WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?
SNAP!

OR—TAKE IT EASY, OR I'LL BLOW YOUR HEAD OFF!!
AWRK!!

?
TWANG
YOU ASSHOLE!! YOU BURNED MY EAR!!

HOROTHAKES!!
YOU WERE EXPECTING MARGE COLONEL KANSER!!?

WHAT IN THE GALAXY ARE YOU DOING HERE?
LOOKING FOR YOU SEBASTIAN WHAT ELSE?

NOW—WRITAMINN IT! HOW COULD YOU ??
COME ON... —THERE'S SOMEONE WHO NEEDS YOUR SPECIAL TALENTS. I'LL FILL YOU IN ON THE WAY TO THE CAMP.

WHERE ARE WE HEADING?
YOU'LL SEE—IT'S QUITE A PLACE.
I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU SINCE THE SIRIUS THING—WHAT'T HAVE YOU BEEN DOING?
A LOT, MY FRIEND, A LOT. SINCE THE REBELLION ON SIRIUS I'VE BEEN INVOLVED WITH A GROUP THAT HAVE REALLY GOT SOME ANSWERS TO THIS FUCK-UP OF A SYSTEM!
YEAH? AND HOW COME YOU GOT OFF SIRIUS? LAST THINGS I HEARD YOU WERE HOLED UP IN THE VERNALIAN GHETTO.
JALEN GOT ME OFF.
JALEN?
ONE THING FOR SURE—YOUR DRIVING HASN'T IMPROVED ANY!
HAH!

NO ROTHLESS WERE BEING CLOSE-MOUTHED BUT I COULD SEE CLEARLY THAT A BIG, EXPENSIVE OPERATION WAS BEING PLANNED. CRATES WERE LYING EVERYWHERE, SPILLING THE CONTENTS OF WEAPONS, AMMUNITION AND MACHINE PARTS ON TO THE COLD STONE FLOOR OF THE ANCIENT TEMPLE
WHERE ARE THE OTHERS?
OUT BACK ASSEMBLING THE MACHINES—
YA WANT SOME OF THIS?

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PEOPLE THAT BUILT THIS PLACE? KATTALEG INDIGENES?
I THOUGHT THERE'D BEEN INTELLIGENT SPECIES?
THEY EITHER DIED OUT OR LEFT A LONG TIME AGO, I GUESS—STILL IT MAKES AN IDEAL BASE FOR OUR OPERATION HERE
AND THAT IS?
I'M SORRY SEBASTIAN, I'VE BEEN HOLDING OUT ON YOU—LOOK, THE BEST THING IS, IF I LET JALEN TELL YOU ABOUT IT HIMSELF.
ZZZZZ
YOU MUST MEAN THE FAMOUS JALEN STRAVENSK. I'M SUITABLY IMPRESSED—GOT ANY CLEAN SHIRTS MY SIZE AROUND?

NEXT: DOUBLECROSS AT THE DEATH FACTORY

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Media Review From page 28

unlike other women writers who've emerged to write some of the best new books of the last decade (Le Guin, Russ, Bradley, Piercy et al) Anne McCaffrey doesn't incorporate any feminist ideas at all. Though Pern is extremely sexist, all Menolly wants to do is make music--nobody, least of all herself, seems at all

Dragonsong (3) 80p

Dragonsinger (4) 85p

aware that her own struggle to be a musician is a result of the position of all women on the planet. When she cut her hand, her own mother attempted to make enough scar tissue form over the wound to stop her playing ever again. This is regarded as unfortunate, not because it's a crime against a human being, but because it threatened to deprive the Harpers of her talent.

In short, what makes *Dragonsinger* so disappointing is the retreat into telling a story about one person—not about a social order or even about a person trying to rebel against one. We hear that the fifth book, *White Dragon*, is going into print in the States. Hopefully, it will tie up those loose ends from the earlier books, but also go back to their wider view of Pern. There's no doubt that Anne McCaffrey's attempt to write about hold-life and craft-life instead of just about Weyrs was a move in the right direction—I just hope that it works better next time around.

A.M.

THE FEELIES—MICK FARREN
Illustrated by CHRIS WELCH

Big O £2.95 158 pages; 12 illustrations

Another neatly fitting literary jigsaw from the man who does everything, Mick Farren. This is about what seems to be the only escape in a cold, uncompromising future life/existence "Integrated Entertainment" or the feelies is the doorway to a world of total fantasy, a sort of tailor made parallel world where those with enough money can be who they want (sex no obstacle) from Jesus Christ to the Marquis de Sade for as long as they can afford it.

The story relates at all times to "Combined Media" (the feelies machine) which concerns not only the fantasies but all the people connected on all levels. These range from those who can afford feelie time to those who can't but who are prepared to go through the agonies of a television competition to attempt to win feelie time for the rest of their lives. Also, on the other side, from the manufacturers, these people include the men at the top of the corporation, the people who make the experiences and those at the bottom who attend the corpse-like fantasis ng individuals.

For most, it is a dream that will never come true but for the "dreamers" it can become a nightmare; how do you get up and walk out, where is the emergency button? Is the human body meant to be the inert housing of a highly active brain until it stops functioning and is it right to fall in love with a "stiff"?

The illustrations (all full page plates except one) are drawn by Chris Welch who contributed to "Oz" and "Nasty Tales" and who now produces work for the Birmingham Arts Lab. He was an important figure in holding together the British comic scene when it was threatened by obsolescence. His contribution to this book is not so immediately apparent. It is when you come across the illustrations alongside the text that you see just how brilliant they are in capturing the "atmosphere" of the story.

Although some may feel that the price is a bit high, this is a beautifully presented book. Well printed, on good paper, it is a little over twice the size of a regular paperback and I think justifies its cost. It's also a great read.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
—CHRIS ACHILLEOS

Paper Tiger £3.95 92pp

This is a collection of paintings by Chris Achilleos and one of the best from Phin publications.

Apart from a few pages by Lee Anders telling you exactly what constitutes a hero, the book consists entirely of pictures. These are taken mainly from book covers, with a few of a rather more erotic nature which appeared in the sort of magazines no-one admits to buying.

Chris Achilleos has done many paperback covers and his work will be quite familiar to many people. His covers include some of the British Robert E. Howard's and Edgar Rice-Burrough's, the Gor Series by John Norman, McAllister books (westerns) and Dr. Who books.

With a dose of adherence to the title of Beauty and the Beast, his combination of savagery and realism makes for heroic stuff indeed.

S.L.

Magazines
(latest issues)
Heavy Metal Nov,Dec. each 95p
Starlog 17,18 each 85p
Future 6,7 each 85p
Omni 1,2,3 each 85p
Write for standing order arrangements

Continued on page 44

RADIO
COMIX
BY BONK ©1978
featuring
RENEGADE
RADIOS
ON THE
RAMPAGE

WHAT WE DOIN TONIGHT SNIB EN WHAT WE DOIN'?
I DUNNO
WE DOIN SUMMAT EN SNIB?
ARE WE GONNA DO SUMP UP
SHADDAP WILL YA!
LEMME THINK
HONK
YOU GUYS BUG ME! "WHAT WE DOIN' WHAT WE DOIN'" SHEET!
SHUCKS
HONK
YIPE
SLAP
RADIOS WILL BE RESTLESS TONIGHT!
BYE
LATER
WELL LOOKEE HERE...
A CITIZEN..
ALL ON HIS TOD!
YEAH
GET 'IM
YIPEE
YAHOO

HERE WE COME!
CLIK
CLAK
READY OR NOT
CLAK
HI THERE ..GULP..
BONE-BAG
CLIK
CLAK
FLESH-SCUM
UM
NO!
SWEAT-ROT!
BAND

©Bonk 1978 BRAINSTORM-STUDIOS

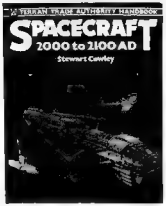
BETRAYED BY DREAMS I WANDER WEIRDLING WAYS,
BENEATH THE FRONDS OF PALMS IN JUNGLES OLD
WHEN EARTH HERSELF WAS YOUNG AND BRAVE AND BOLD.
WHERE HYBRID BLOOMS SWAY SERPENTINE I GAZE
ON RUINS WHICH NO OTHER EYES HAVE SEEN,
WHOSE BLACK FOUNDATIONS SINK IN PRIMAL GREEN,
A CRAWL WITH GEMS OF PREHISTORIC DAYS.

BEYOND OR ANGLED RUINS CEASELESSLY POUND
THE WAVES OF FRENZIED OCEAN FRESHLY BORNED,
IN WHICH NEVER YET MAN'S ANCESTORS HAVE SPAWNED,
...AND HERE I FIND STRANGE MYSTERY PROFOUND:
THESE MONOLITHS OF WHICH I STAND IN AWE.
WHO BUILDED THEM UPON THIS PRIMAL SHORE?
AND WHAT WILD SECRETS HAVE THE AGES DROWNED?

FROM BOOKS IN WAKING WORLDS I KNOW THE NAME
OF SUCH A CITY LOST IN OCEANS DEEP,
WHERE ANCIENT ONES IN UNQUIET SLUMBERS KEEP
THE LORE OF DARK DIMENSIONS AND THE FLAME
OF ELDER MAGICKS BURNING, TILL A TIME,
WHEN UPWARD FROM THE ACON-SILVED SLIME,
VAST SHAPES WILL COME AS ONCE BEFORE THEY CAME.
AYE, AND THAT FANE OF EVIL WAS R'LYEH,
WHERE DREAMING CTHULHU LIES IN CHAINS THAT BIND,
SENDING HIS NIGHTMARES OUT TO HUMANKIND,
DROWNING THEIR NOBLE DREAMS IN NAMELESS MIRE
AND DREAMING STILL! START AS FROM THE PILE
SNAKE TENTACULAR ARMS AND IN A WHILE
A FACE THAT CROWNS THE BULK OF EVIL'S SIRE!

Media Review

From page 37



SPACECRAFT 2000 to 2100 A.D.
(Terran Trade Authority Handbook)
by STEWART COWLEY

Hamlyn £2.95 100 pages

The first thing that struck me about this book was that for a full colour hardback, the price is very reasonable. I then went on to notice that some of the art work in this book is the same as in Mechanismo (reviewed in N.M.2) and even more of the art is printed in the "Encyclopedia of S.F." (reviewed this issue). The reason for this is the artwork is supplied by a group of S.F. artists going under the name of "Young Artists". As a group they were largely responsible for the two aforementioned books and have been supplying many S.F. book jacket covers in the last 5 years.

This book consists of sections of about 4 pages devoted to each spaceship or machine. This original painting is printed with a few black and white side and front projections, a fictional history with details of service and a few specifications made up to fit the drawings.

The idea behind the book is highly original but unfortunately there is great lack of detail which throws the whole book into the genre of children's books. Although the idea is original, the use of mainly reprinted art takes the originality away. Seeing one or two of this kind of book is all right but if it continues, I feel we will be witnessing the beginning of the bastardisation of Science Fiction with too many publishers wanting to make a quick buck without giving a damn about the S.F. market or or its future now that it is the biggest single genre in bookselling. Basically this book is very well produced and many people will enjoy it, but to me it just triggered off what I have written above and I accept it only if it is a one-off.

P.S. Our games expert has informed us that this book is ideal for computer gaming.

R.K.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION

Octopus Books £4.95 Hardcover

This is a superb collage of all aspects of Science Fiction. It has sections on S.F. themes, classical and new-wave S.F., pulps, films, aliens, art, machinery and hardware, the merging of fiction and fact, and more including lists of magazines produced and films made.

The book is written in twelve sections with an index and a facts index by such notaries as Brian Stableford, Harry Harrison, Patrick Moore and Chris Priest to mention the better known. It is very well illustrated throughout providing an excellent visual compliment to a very enjoyable and informative text.

This book provides a good read, a lot of information, a not so sparse history of Science Fiction and also a history of S.F. illustration. With a foreword by Isaac Asimov and in hardback at £4.95 you can't really go wrong—every home should have one.

THE BOOK OF CONQUESTS
—JIM FITZPATRICK

Paper Tiger £4.25

This is a tale of epic proportions; a tale of sorcery, of heroes and of gore and glory. It is related through the incarnations of Tuan who briefly tells of the inhabitants of Eireann up to the coming and settling of the Fir Bolg. He then tells of a vision prophesying the coming of the Tuatha De Danann and from there the arrival and ensuing battle.

The book is written and illustrated by Jim Fitzpatrick. He sticks quite closely to the traditional way of narration while at the same time making a very reasonable text, and in this respect he has produced an excellent work. However I cannot quite say the same for what is the most immediately striking feature of this book, the illustrations.

I am most reluctant to put down anyone who keeps alive one of our most ancient and beautiful art forms and I do not find Mr. Fitzpatrick's work unpleasant to look at. It can be divided into two parts, the borderwork and the pictures. The borderwork which consists of Celtic knotwork with of course intertwined mythical beasts is of a pleasant modern style. It is in the actual pictures that I find his work dissatisfying. It is not that they are poorly executed, the technical points are satisfactory (i.e. use of colour, composition). However, I feel that they lack a certain "Ingredient X" that would make them totally captivating.

This is a beautifully presented book and this sort of thing is preferable to books of individual illustrations. It is a most worthwhile publication, it's a pity it isn't a masterpiece. S.L.

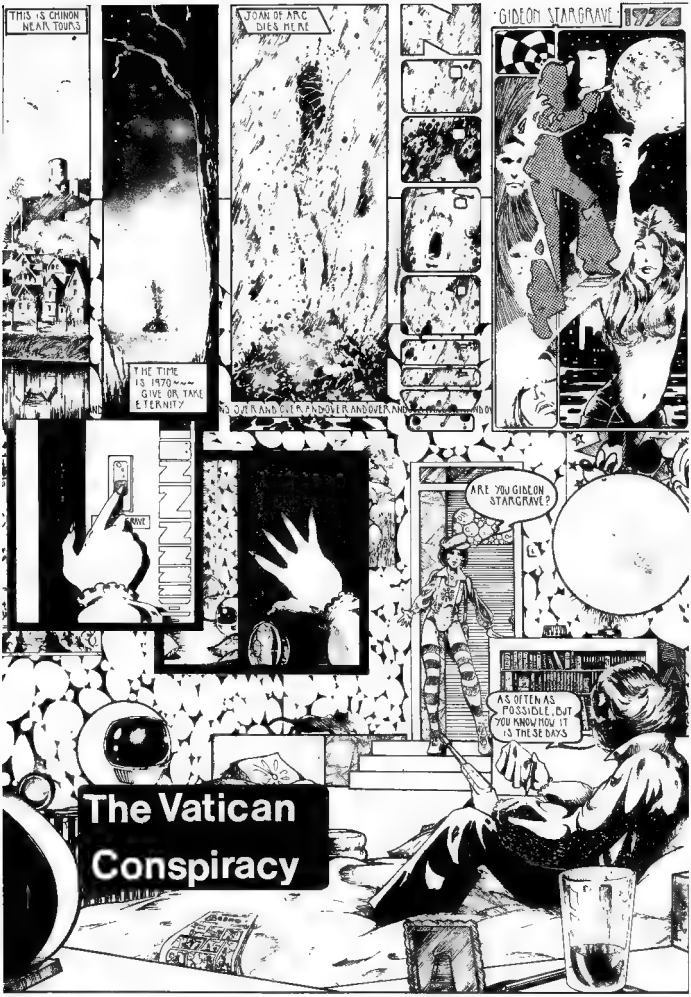
HOW TO ORDER

TOTAL UP THE LISTED PRICE OF THE GOODS REQUIRED AND ADD THE POSTAGE AND PACKING CHARGE.
POSTAGE AND PACKING CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

50p FOR 1st ITEM ORDERED (30p MAGAZINES), THEN ADD 10% OF LIST PRICE FOR ANY SUBSEQUENT ITEMS. (THIS ALSO APPLIES TO SURFACE MAIL OVERSEAS, SORRY NO AIRMAIL.)

PLEASE LIST ALL ITEMS REQUIRED AND SEND ORDERS TO "SCIENCE FICTION BOOKSHOP", 40 WEST CROSSCAUSEWAY, EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND.
MAKE ALL CHEQUES, P.O.s etc. PAYABLE TO S.F BOOKSHOP IN STERLING ONLY (STRICTLY CASH WITH ORDER).

REMEMBER TO INCLUDE YOUR OWN ADDRESS!


THIS IS CHINON NEAR TOURS
JOAN OF ARC DIES HERE
GIDEON STARGRAVE
THE TIME IS 1970~~~ GIVE OR TAKE ETERNITY
ARE YOU GIDEON STARGRAVE?
AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE, BUT YOU KNOW HOW IT IS THESE DAYS
The Vatican Conspiracy

ET VOUS?
MY NAME'S JAN DARK MONSIEUR.
HE WATCHES FROM THE GUN'S SAFETY. HER VOICE HAS THE COLOUR OF SOMBER. SHE MOVES LIKE LIQUID. BUT YET
HAVE YOU NOT SEEN?
HAVE I SEEN?! OH, HA-HA, JAN DARK. I SEE NOTHING ELSE, WAKING AND SLEEPING. DON'T TELL ME ABOUT CHAOS I'VE HAD ENOUGH. THE WORLD CAN FALL APART IF IT LIKES I WOULDN'T GIVE IT SPIT NOW
JAN DARK?
PERHAPS I NEED YOUR HELP
CHAOS THREATENS.
AUSPICIOUS EH?
SELF PITY NEVER SAVED THE WORLD
AH! SO WHO DO YOU SUGGEST I PITY? YO
IN THE DISTANCE, OVER THE RUINED SKYLINE, THE SIRENS STILL SOUND FAR OFF. EXPLOSIONS OF GLASS AND THE RATTLE OF MACHINE GUN FIRE MOVE ECHOES IN THE STREETS. AND EVEN THE SLOW FALL OF RAIN CANNOT EXTINGUISH THE NAPALM FIRES OR WASH AWAY THE BLOOD IN THE CHOKED GUTTERS. IT'S NO JOKE
THAT MAY BE MY DOOR
FREEZE HERETICS!!!
GIDEON THROWS HIMSELF AT THE BOLTS PISTOL ~ QUICK AS A WINK HE SNATCHES...
SWINGS AND DISCHARGES
AND THE IMPLOSION BOLT SCORCHES THE AIR AND FUSES THE PRIEST'S SILVER CROSS INTO HIS SHATTERED BREAST BONE
BINGO! SHALL WE GO?

1. PENNIES FROM HEAVEN
THIS AREA HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AN ENTROPY ZONE, MY LAD.
WE'RE OPERATING UNDER MARTIAL LAW WHILE WE SEAL OFF THE SECTOR.
YOU'LL NEVER TAKE ME ALI
OKAY, STOP THERE LOVE IT'S ALL OVER.
HELLO, YOU ARE A FUNNY FELLOW, EH?
EVENIN' ALL
CONSTABLE, YOU ARE A SHIT
MIDNIGHT
YOU OKAY??
FINE
HE'S RUINED MY SHIRT BUT NO REAL DAMAGE IT ALWAYS HAPPENS WHEN CHAOS SETS IN
WE WERE MOVING IN DIFFERENT TIMES SO THE BUGGER COULDN'T DO MUCH
MAN! IT'S GETTING BAD I THINK WE NEED...
A CAFÉ
IT'S ORANGE JUICE HOPE YOU DON'T MIND BUT I CAN'T STAND ANYTHING STRONGER.
AFTER THE ALTERCATION WITH THE PRIEST, I'VE DECIDED TO HELP YOU...
BUT IT DEPENDS IT CAN GET REALLY BAD OUT THERE

WHAT USUALLY HAPPENS IS THAT THE LANDSCAPE BREAKS DOWN INTO ARCHETYPES.
THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I USED TO FIGHT.
BUT WHY BOTHER? EVERYTHING TENDS TOWARDS CHAOS. ANYWAY, THE GOOD OLD SECOND LAW.
I WENT THROUGH HELL FOR THIS LOT, AND ALL I'VE EVER HAD IS
PAIN, EH?
SILLY!
AM TASTEFULLY OUT OF DATE. HOW ABOUT YOU?
HOW DO YOU LIKE THE JOLLY HOCKEYSTICKS LOOK?
WHAT? OH!
PERSPECTIVE IS GONE. LINES OF SIGHT COLLIDE AND SLIP THEIR ARRAY.
THE PATTERN IS DISRUPTED AND THE SPIN OF THE CHAKRAS BROKEN FOR THAT MOMENT OF ALWAYS.
GIDEON?
ENGRAH'ATADA
1964

NOW
...I THINK I'D APPRECIATE BEING TOLD WHY A PRIEST SHOULD RUIN MY DOOR ACCUSE US OF HERESY AND TRY TO KILL ME. AND WHY, I WONDER, DOES IT ALL COINCIDE WITH THE WORST SURGE OF ANARCHY LONDON'S SEEN IN MONTHS? AS I SAID, SUSPICIOUS YOU OBVIOUSLY CAN TELL ME MORE.
LOCK, STARGRAVE.
..IT WAS GIVEN TO ME BY A NOVICE NUN, WHO WAS LATER RAPED AND TORTURED BY THE POPE'S OWN INQUISITORS. IT LEADS TO A VATICAN PLOT TO DESTROY THIS GODLESS WORLD. THE SIGNS ARE OF CHAOS AND THE HEAD IS FENRIS WOLF, WHO WILL DEVOUR THE MOON AND LAY WASTE THE WORLD.
RAGNARÖK?
YES.
I SEE. LOOKS AS IF ALL ROADS LEAD TO

ROIIIE...
IS HE COMING?
HAS HE COME TO SEEK ME OUT?
...MASS SUICIDE. THE LEMMINGS SYNDROME. THIS IS BAD.
WE'RE INTO FINAL PHASE ANARCHY NOW, JAN DARK.
YOU KNOW WHAT'S NEXT, EH?
SPIRIT OF THE AGE
TELL ME!!!
TERMINAL ENTROPY. THE END.
WE'VE GOT TO ISOLATE THE CHAOS FACTOR.
FAST!
BREAKING...
PLEASE?
BUT I'LL STOP HIM...I'M NOT AFRAID...IN SWITZERLAND--DEAD----
AND THEN WILL BE THE WOLF.
I WONDER WHAT'S THE QUICKEST...
OH SH....
RUN!

DEAR GOD! WHAT?
DON'T WORRY, SHE'S DEAD... JUST RUN.
WHAT HAPPENED? ...MY... I CAN'T THINK STRAIGHT... IT'S GONE...
THE SKY TEARS OPEN LIKE SILK AND THE GROUND IS SPUN AWAY INTO A DAZZLE OF WIND AND CLOUD. THE HORIZON TILTS. THEN UP AND OUT.
WE BROKE FREE OF THE ZONE JUST IN TIME, TOO. ANY LONGER AND OUR DNA PATTERNS WOULD HAVE BEEN LOCKED IN THE DISRUPTION CYCLE.
I CALL IT THE METEMPSYCHOSIS HELIX - BUT THAT'S ME JUST BEING SMART...
I THINK I'M GOING INSANE.
YOU CAN KEEP ME COMPANY THEN--- UH-OH. ARE YOU STRAPPED IN? BECAUSE HERE COME THE FUNNY BITS!
JAN CHOKES ON A CRY AS, OUT, BREAKING FREE OF THE SUN'S MOLTEN GLARE, COME SWIRLS OF DARKNESS TURNING FIRE ACROSS THE CLOUD AND SHATTERING LIGHT ON THEIR SUNS.
NEXT:
'PRELUDE TO RAGNARÖK'

PISTON
PULL TO RELEASE
GRAHAM.P.MANLEY '78.

Immortality Just Forever